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O 160941Z APR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3322  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 6732  
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 4469  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 3083  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 7617  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 1687  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5024  
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 1231  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA//  
INFO RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA 7356

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 000363

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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/R/MR:STHIBEAULT AND  
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, AZAIBACK, AND  
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA MDAVIDSON  
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC  
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Syria/Israel, Syria/Palestinian Authority, Lebanon, Iraq,  
Pelosi, Lantos (4/13-14)

¶1. Summary: Syrian papers on Apr. 15 featured a statement by the Syrian Foreign Ministry on Apr. 14 that statements by US national of Syrian origin, Ibrahim Suleiman, who visited Israel and met with the Israeli Knesset Foreign and Security Committee, do not reflect the Syrian viewpoint, adding that "Syria, which is keen to realize a just and comprehensive peace, has repeatedly rejected holding any secret talks with Israel or using unofficial channels." It added

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that it was natural for Ibrahim Suleiman or any other expatriate of Syrian origin to visit his motherland, just like any other who offers to play a role in the peace process. He has heard Syria's position that rejects conducting talks in the dark or through unofficial channels. All papers reported a statement by Minister of Information Mohsen Bilal to Syrian TV on Apr. 14 confirming that Ibrahim Suleiman's visit to Israel, and his statements and viewpoints do not reflect the Syrian viewpoint.

Papers also reported FM Walid Mouallem's meeting on Apr. 12 with a delegation representing the Palestinian Legislative Council, headed by Abdul Rahman Zidan, who reiterated the importance of strengthening Palestinian national unity to enhance the capability of confronting the Israeli practices targeting the Palestinian people's existence and unity. FM Mouallem stressed Syria's continuous support for the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights to establish an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Members of the Palestinian delegation briefed FM Mouallem on the situation in the occupied Palestinian lands and the suffering of the Palestinian people due to the siege imposed by the Israeli occupation authorities. They expressed appreciation for Syria's national stances towards the Palestinian cause, expressing thanks for the efforts it has exerted for formation of the Palestinian national unity government.

Government-owned Al-Thawrah on Apr. 13 reported US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's remarks to NBC News describing her visit to Syria as good and noted the importance of dialogue with Syria. The paper noted that Pelosi rejected the White House's criticism of the visit and said "Bush wants to act as a king and to have carte blanche to conduct foreign policy as he wishes."

End of summary.

## 12. Selected Headlines:

"Damascus reiterates rejection of secret talks with Israel. Foreign Ministry: Suleiman's statements don't reflect Syria's viewpoint. Bilal: Suleiman's statements express his own point of view" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 4/15)

"President Asad condemns the terrorist bombings in Algiers and Casablanca" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/13)

"FM Mouallem reiterates to the Palestinian Legislative Council delegation the importance of unifying ranks in the face of Israeli practices" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/13)

"Pelosi: My visit to Syria was good; Bush will not get carte blanche to conduct foreign policy as he wishes" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/13)

"More than 17 Palestinians wounded in Balain and Salamona. Israeli occupation uses Palestinian youths as human shields" (Government-owned Tishreen, 4/14)

"Al-Hoss calls on the government to resign. Karami holds the government responsible for the continuing crisis. Lahoud: Endorsing the International Tribunal on the basis of Chapter 7 means civil war" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 4/15)

"Lebanese circles warn against the return of the civil war atmosphere. Re-arming Lebanese militias aims at enforcing foreign conspiracies" (Government-owned Tisheen, 4/14)

"The February 14 figures place their wagers on internationalization" (Government-owned Tisheen, 4/14)

"Killing of 5 US soldiers in Iraq raises death toll among US soldiers in Iraq to 3298. US Democratic Senator Harry Reed criticizes Bush: What progress are you talking about?" (Government-owned Tishreen, 4/14)

"A suicide bomber manages to reach the heavily guarded Iraqi parliament in the Green Area" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 4/13)

"Blix, Top UN Weapons Inspector, rules out the possibility of a US attack against Iran" (Government-owned Tishreen, 4/14)

"While Tehran announces readiness to repel any aggression, Washington: A military solution is not inevitable. We will be patient" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 4/15)

## 13. Editorial Block Quotes:

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"King Bush's Illusions"  
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Isam Dari, Chief Editor of government-owned Tishreen, commented (4/14): "In a press interview with NBC News, US House Speaker Pelosi stated that President Bush 'ignores facts and does not want to enter dialogue....'

"Pelosi also said that 'Bush wants to act as a king and to have carte blanche to conduct foreign policy as he wishes....'

"Facts have started to appear before the US public, which was deceived for years and frightened by massive threats to its security at home.... The US Administration is fabricating lies to launch wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and level accusations against Iran, Syria, and anyone who stands in the way of the neoconservatives' ambition to control the entire world....

"President Bush thought he was a king and that none of his 'satellites' had the right to disobey him or break his will and visit Syria, so as not to find out the truth and convey it to

Americans, who thought their Administration was forced to wage wars to defend them and protect their security, stability, and prosperity....

"Not only did the US Administration fail to admit its failure and correct the mistakes of its foreign policy, but it also attacked anyone who spoke the truth....

"The White House, which is occupied by neoconservatives, -- or let us say the spokesman for this White House -- was so rude as to criticize Pelosi because she said that Syria wants peace! Even such a statement, which is based on the conviction of the Speaker and the truth of the Syrian position, has become a violation bordering on a crime punishable by the law of neoconservatives and Bush's Zionist administration....

"It is true that Bush is not a king, as Mrs. Pelosi said, but his actions, policies, positions, and intellectual, political, and military terrorism against his opponents at home and abroad make him a king, indeed a dictator with a tight grip on the necks of nations and Americans themselves, who pay a heavy price with their money and the blood of their sons for the adventures of this dictator, who is acting outside American and international law and all worldly and divine norms and conventions....

"It is fortunate that there are sensible people in the United States who still believe in dialogue among nations and oppose their king and his illusions and mad adventures, which brought further wars, destruction, and terrorism upon the world and disasters and shame upon the American people...."

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"Bush Is Alone"  
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Adnan Ali, a commentator in government-owned Al-Thawrah, wrote (4/14): "US Congressman Tom Lantos' stated that he intends to visit Syria once again and that he rejects the US administration's policy toward Damascus....

"Statements by Lantos, who is not known as a friend of Syria, reflect a growing opposition within the political elite in the United States, including the Congress, to the policy of Bush's administration, which is being described in the United States itself as arrogant and stupid because it is basically based on the use of force and the attempts to exclude and isolate others....

"Bush today finds himself alone more than ever before. But he has not yet learned the lessons, and there are those who still feed his illusions in Iraq and the region and, indeed, motivate him to commit new follies, perhaps against Iran or others...."

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"Pretending Speaker"  
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Izz-al-Din al-Darwish, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (4/14): "In a recent statement, Lebanese Christian leader Samir Jeajea attacked the Lebanese national resistance, played down its sacrifices, and said that it has become a burden to Lebanon.... "Jeajea is a bloodsucker who, as a warlord, killed 14,000 people during the Lebanese civil war....

"Jeajea handed over Lebanese citizens to Israel during the war and is now sending his militias to receive training in Israel, as reported by Lebanese, Israeli, and Jordanian media.... The leader of the Lebanese Forces party, who represents only a small group of Lebanese, is trying to drag Lebanon toward civil strife and new civil war....

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"Impasse in Iraq"

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Muhammad Ali Buzah, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (4/14): "President Bush arrogantly refuses to admit his failure in Iraq and the defeat of his plan...."

"The honorable steps that would bring US policy out of its current crisis and lay the foundations for a just, strong, and comprehensive peace that guarantees security and stability in the region and the world, are: acknowledging failure, reconsidering and rationalizing wrong policies, setting a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq, leaving the region for its people, stopping interference, ending support for Israel, refraining from waging Israel's wars by proxy, and forcing Israel to comply with international resolutions ...."

Corbin